

Children's Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2022 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Helen Belcher, Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Kathryn MacDermid, Cllr Kelvin Nash, Cllr Antonio Piazza, Cllr Mike Sankey, Cllr James Sheppard, Cllr Mark Verbinnen, Dr Mike Thompson and John Hawkins

Also Present:

Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Dominic Muns and Cllr Suzanne Wickham

50 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from the following committee members:

- Cllr Jo Trigg (who attended the hybrid meeting virtually)
- Cllr Caroline Corbin

Apologies were also received from:

- Cllr Peter Hutton

51 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8 June 2022, as a true and correct record.

52 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

53 **Chairman's Announcements**

The chairman reminded the committee that BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group was replaced by the new Integrated Care System on 1 July.

He also noted that he had raised objections with officers about holding the meeting in the Kennet Room and hoped to find an alternative venue for future meetings.

The Portfolio Holder for SEND and Inclusion was pleased to report that the Specialist Advisory Teaching Service had been working with 18 schools across Wiltshire to achieve the British Dyslexia Quality Mark. She reported that one school had already achieved the quality mark and that more were expected to follow. Only 15 schools in the country outside Wiltshire had achieved the quality mark, so the Portfolio Holder was delighted that Wiltshire was taking a leading role.

54 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

55 **Regular updates**

No questions on the regular updates had been received from members in advance of the meeting.

55a Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative

Members were reassured by the recent report on the Young Person's Fostering Consultation Panel and the feedback from potential fosterers. The detail in the report about the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) interviews was also praised.

55b School Ofsted Judgements

The chairman thanked officers for the detail about the relative performance of maintained schools and academies included in the report.

In order to allow the committee to assess the impact of the school effectiveness, the chairman asked whether the council recorded the schools that it engaged with on their journey towards a good Ofsted judgement. In response, the Interim Head of School Effectiveness explained that they assisted all maintained schools and would be able to provide details of the services that were traded with academies.

55c DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education

The chairman welcomed the update on mental health support and encouraged members to make schools aware of the support available in their divisions.

55d Working together to improve school attendance - update

The chairman reminded the committee that the Department for Education (DfE) had published non-statutory guidance in May 2022 to help schools, trusts, governing bodies, and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance.

The Virtual School Extended Duties Project Lead explained that the new guidance would take effect from September and would become statutory

around a year later. There would be a focus on multiple agencies working together to ensure that support was in place. As such, Wiltshire Council's School Attendance Support Team would shift their approach towards a greater level of partnership working, with less emphasis on individual case work. The team would provide free advice to both maintained and non-maintained schools, including targeted support meetings each term. However, it was possible that there would continue to be an element of traded service with schools in addition to the statutory service. Officers stated that they would provide further information once the proposals had been fully developed.

In response to a question about how many staff would be in the School Attendance Support Team, the officer explained that they were in the process of building the team. There were currently around 11 full time equivalent Education Welfare Officers (EWOs), but it was possible that the team could draw on a range of professionals such as Early Support Advisors. Schools were able to refer children that they had concerns about to the Education Welfare Service and there was a committee looking at children missing out on education. The council had also recently obtained access to live attendance data for all children in Wiltshire allowing them to put support in place for those with an attendance below 90 percent.

55e New ways of working - Directors update

The Director of Families and Children's Services was pleased to announce that the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) had started running the previous week. The director gave background information about its implementation, explaining that drugs and alcohol featured in around two thirds of care proceedings. Under the new system parents would meet with the judge on a fortnightly basis outside of the hearings, in a non-adversarial setting, to establish the best way to support the family. A specialist multi-disciplinary FDAC team in Wiltshire Council would also provide expert advice. The director noted that FDAC was a national initiative and had produced improved outcomes, allowing a higher proportion of children to remain with their families.

In response to a question about the rise in elected home education since the start of the pandemic, the Interim Head of School Effectiveness noted that the council had been working closely with families and schools to encourage a route back into school.

The chairman asked if thanks could be sent to all of Wiltshire's schools for their work in preparing children for their exams.

56 School Health and Wellbeing survey

A Public Health Strategist explained that children between the ages of 8 and 18 had taken part in a survey, which had been undertaken to inform planning, commissioning, and service improvement. The findings were generally positive suggesting that most children had good health and wellbeing. However, there was variation, with children identifying with vulnerable groups tending to have less favourable outcomes. She noted that the survey went out in March 2020

but had to be cut short due to the pandemic and was then repeated in May-July 2021. The report before the committee was based mainly on the 2021 survey, but comparisons had been made with the 2020 report, and an earlier one in 2017, where there was significant variation. She then went on to outline the methodology and key findings, including:

- 65 schools had taken part in the 2021 survey including 4 independent schools. There had been a total of 7,499 responses with 55.8 percent of those coming from primary age children.
- 53 percent of those who took part identified with at least one of the vulnerable groups identified in the report.
- In order to establish how representative the survey had been, schools were ranked by the percentage of children eligible for free school meals. The primary schools with both the highest and lowest proportion of eligible children were represented. However, none of the nine secondary schools with the highest proportion of eligible children took part in the survey.
- All participating schools were given feedback about their results, as well as a comparison with the Wiltshire average, so that they could complete a self-evaluation.
- Six thematic reports would be published to look at specific areas e.g., healthy lifestyle.
- Secondary age pupils thought it was less easy to access mental health support than primary school children.
- A particular area of concern was a five percent increase, between the 2017 and 2021 surveys, in the percentage of Year 8 pupils saying that they had ever self-harmed.
- The findings of the 2021 survey would be presented to the Youth Council.
- The findings would also be discussed at strategic groups with different agencies, so they could establish the tangible actions that needed to take place.

The Public Health Strategist emphasised that social norms had a greater impact on young people than adults. She explained that the pre-frontal cortex, a part of the brain with an important role in planning and decision making, did not fully mature until a person was in their mid-20s. For this reason, young people had an increased demand for reward, making them more susceptible to influences from their peers. She was optimistic that the results of the survey could help to challenge young people's perceptions about their own behaviour and be fed back to them in a constructive way.

During the discussion the following points were made:

- Members thanked the Public Health Strategist for the update.
- The Public Health Strategist explained that trauma training had shown that bullying behaviour was an indication of need by the perpetrator and that it was important to explore what was driving them to act in the way that they were. Further information about understanding this behaviour could be passed to schools.
- In response to a query about how more schools could be encouraged to participate in the next survey, it was explained that it was planned to carry out

surveys every two to three years and that further work would be done with education colleagues.

- Members were encouraged to promote the survey to schools in their divisions.
- It was noted that there was probably a slight underrepresentation of pupils in receipt of free school meals from secondary schools. As data was taken from the school census it only captured those pupils receiving free school meals and not all of them that were eligible.
- Young people were keen to spend time with their peers so this might be reflected in the volunteering activities that they participated in.
- Decisions about questions in the surveys were taken in consultation with different departments across Wiltshire Council.
- The Public Health Strategist highlighted that the evidence base about the impact of gambling on young people was growing and it would be beneficial to obtain further comparative data.

Resolved

1) For the committee to receive the five thematic reports and infographics when they are produced.

2) To receive an update within the next 12 months to inform the committee on actions taken, or plans made, by the council based on the outcome of the survey.

3) For Children's Select Committee Members to lobby the schools in their division if they had not taken part in the survey to encourage them to take part in future surveys.

57 Disadvantaged Learners task group - Executive response

Cllr Trigg, the lead member of the task group, welcomed that seven of the eight recommendations had been accepted and the eighth accepted with amendments. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills thanked the task group for their work and said that the actions would be followed up.

Resolved

For the council's plan to increase the number of pupil premium partner schools to ensure further reach for the Disadvantaged Learners team, and the principles it is helping to promote, to be added to the forward work programme.

58 Overview and Scrutiny Activities Updates

The chairman reported that the vice-chairman and he had met with a senior scrutiny officer to review the progress made towards the forward work programme (FWP).

Cllr Tony Jackson raised the issue of the of the FUEL Programme, a holiday activity programme for young people in receipt of benefit related free school meals, and how it was targeted.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services Education and Skills noted that a full report would be circulated and that 2,130 visits had been received over the Easter break with 3,720 meals provided. There were 10 centres offering the service in Wiltshire and work was ongoing to make the programme more easily accessible to children across the whole county. The Head of Traded Services confirmed that students were nominated by schools and that parents and guardians were able to access a portal to sign up. A full report would be produced by the council's leisure team containing the qualitative feedback from participants as well as a breakdown of those who signed up (attached).

59 **Forward Work Programme**

The chairman invited members to make suggestions about items that they felt should be included on the FWP and noted that meetings would be held with the executive later in the year to discuss the programme. He then provided an update to the committee including the following points:

- The Fostering Excellence Task Group had requested an extension to their original timeframe, with a view to presenting its final report to the committee at the meeting after their next meeting.
- The Standing Task Group was also due to meet in September to identify key performance indicators for Getting to Outstanding. There was currently a vacancy, so members were invited to contact the senior scrutiny officer if they would like to join the group.
- It was planned to advertise the Children and Young People's Mental Health Task Group and the Youth Provision – Gap Analysis Task Group shortly.
- The Access to Post-16 Education Task Group had already received interest.
- Plans were being drawn up for a rapid scrutiny exercise into Wiltshire Council's intention to establish a multi academy trust.

Resolved

To note the forward work programme.

60 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was reported as Tuesday 13 September 2022. [Note – this has now been amended to Tuesday 20 September at 10:30am]

61 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.40 am - 12.10 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Matt Hitch
matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718059, e-
mail matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114 or email
communications@wiltshire.gov.uk

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The free holiday activity and food programme

Easter Impact Report

2022

Wiltshire Council Business Plan (2022-2032): Mission and Themes

Empowered People: We get the best start in life, We stay active, We are safe.

Thriving Economy: We have vibrant, well-connected communities, We have the right skills to prosper.

Resilient Communities: We ensure decisions are evidence-based, We live well together.

The Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF) has the potential to meet all four of the council's guiding themes; '**Prevention and early intervention**', '**improving social mobility and tackling inequalities**', '**understanding communities**' and '**working together**'.

Background on HAF

HAF is funded across England by the Department of Education (DofE) and aims to provide children who are eligible for benefits related free school meals (FSM) with free access to enriching activities, nutritious meals and healthy eating information during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. The latest school census states we have **9,753** pupils eligible for FSM in Wiltshire.

The HAF programme is delivered in Wiltshire using the brand FUEL (Food, Unity, Energy, Laughter) and the programme is a direct response to the growing issue of holiday hunger which is having a significant impact on low-income families.

During 2021, Wiltshire Council delivered a core, disability and a funded community offer. In total, **4,714 individual participants** took part in the HAF programme across all three settings with beneficiaries ranging in age from **4-17 years old**.

Nearly **40%** of registered participants were from the **most deprived** areas in Wiltshire (Quintile 1: Index of Multiple Deprivation). The programme totalled 20 face to face delivery days, 49,322 contact hours and provided 31,263 meals.

Objectives

In line with the HAF delivery objectives by the DofE, the FUEL programme vision is to:



Provide meals and snacks to ensure participants can eat healthily over the school holidays.



Provide a range of sport and physical activities to ensure participants can be more active over the school holidays.



Support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing of participants along with wider education attainment. Also give participants a greater knowledge of health and nutrition.



Create a safe environment, combatting social isolation over the school holidays. Use FUEL as a platform to connect schools and other local services.

Food

F is for Food! You will receive a nutritious lunch each day and you'll also have fun and keep fit!



Unity

Unity means making new friends in your community, while friendly staff are supportive and understanding.



Energy

Take part in a range of activities that will keep you energised, exercised and educated.



Laughter

There will be plenty of opportunities for fun and laughter throughout the programme and opportunities to learn new life-skills.



Easter FUEL Programme Components

The Easter delivery in Wiltshire is made up of three main components:

Core FUEL Camps

The core offer is responsible for the delivery of ten activity camps, in priority areas of the county where there is the greatest number of children eligible for FSM shown on the map below. These camps are delivered by three major commissioned suppliers, specialising in food, nutrition and activity provision.

Disability FUEL Camps

Additional FUEL camps for young people with special educational needs and/or a disability are also provided. These camps are delivered by Wiltshire Council staff and appointed coaches who have expertise in delivering and implementing successful provision.




Additional Outcomes

Food bags were provided to FUEL participants attending the Royal Wootton Bassett Easter camp by Swindon Food Collective. The young people and their families received non perishable goods and toiletries, as well as Easter eggs! Salisbury Food Bank also provided food and Easter chocolate to the participants of Salisbury and Amesbury FUEL camps.

Seeds4Success, a youth work charity in Mere, who have been previously awarded a FUEL community grant fund independently ran their own Easter FUEL camp for eligible participants living in the rural areas surrounding Mere and Tisbury.



 Mainstream camp

 Disability camp

FUEL key statistics

Our first delivery period of 2022 included the provision of ten core activity camps to over **700 unique participants** during the Easter holidays in Wiltshire towns with the greatest number of eligible FSM recipients and two SEND specific camps. Over the four days the FUEL camps reached **2,130 total visits** and **provided 3,720 meals**.



Overall FUEL figures for 2021/2022 below:

5,438
individual
participants

34,983
meals
provided

40%
of participants
from
Quintile 1

51,422
contact
hours

Easter breakdown

Primary School	90%
Secondary School	10%
Female	49%
Male	51%
Prefer not to say	<1%

Quintile 1	41%
Quintile 2	23%
Quintile 3	20%
Quintile 4	13%
Quintile 5	3%

20 participants were in foster care, **52 participants** were referred into the programme by social services and **21 participants** were refugees.



Food

Food providers, Occasional Kitchen supplied a **hot nutritious meal and healthy snacks** to each participant at the Easter FUEL camps. Menus were **specifically developed** to ensure a varied and **enticing lunch** was offered on each day of the camp. As well as **reducing holiday hunger**, the meals also gave participants an opportunity to **try new foods** and take **additional food boxes** home to their families.

"Amazing food cooked fresh on the day for the children, plenty of fruit snacks. Well done chef!"

Easter FUEL feedback

The lunches included spaghetti bolognese with peas, chicken pie with new potatoes and mixed vegetables, beef fajitas with roasted peppers and potato wedges and Italian chicken in a tomato and basil sauce with pasta and broccoli. A gluten free and vegan option were also available for each meal choice.



91%

of participants found lunch provided over the Easter holidays beneficial

Nutritional providers, Phunky Foods, delivered **hands on nutritional workshops** to educate participants on the importance of healthy eating. This included making chickpea burgers and marshmallow Easter bunnies.

"My daughter loved the food too the point where she made me make homemade burgers which is good as we usually buy them. But homemade are much better for you and she loves them now!"

Easter FUEL feedback

3,720

 Meals provided at Easter FUEL camps

Had 'happy and full tummies' after attending an Easter FUEL camp

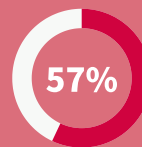


Rated the contents of the hot meals provided at Easter FUEL camps as **good**

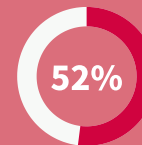


Reported their children **really enjoyed** taking part in the nutritional workshops at Easter FUEL camps

Returning Participants from FUEL 2021



Have seen an improvement in their **child's attitude towards food** since attending FUEL camps



Have seen an improvement in their **child's food choices** after attending FUEL camps

1/3

of participants **tried a new meal** and had **more fruit and vegetables** as a result of being part of Easter FUEL





The FUEL programme supports Wiltshire Council's priority to ensure that all young people get the best start in life.

The camps not only provide hot food, healthy eating advice and a range of activities but also support in the development of character and wellbeing of participants along with wider educational attainment.

I visited one of the Easter FUEL camps and was delighted to see the participants having fun, enjoying a tasty meal as well as being creative and active.

*Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services,
Education and Skills*

Unity

Both the core and disability FUEL camps create a safe, fun and friendly environment for participants to develop social skills and make new friends in their local communities. Over **67% of participants were excited to attend camps** each day.

"Thank you SO much to everyone at fuel. My son is only 6 and was very nervous about attending. He made lots of new friends and has come out of his shell. I have had trouble with my son socially but this has REALLY helped her so I can't thank you enough."

Easter FUEL feedback

"As a parent on benefits, it was great for her to be able to meet other children, rather than being stuck at home because we have no spare money to go out. We only moved here last November & it's given me and my daughter chance to meet new friends."

Easter FUEL feedback



74%

of participants made new friends when attending Easter FUEL camps

The FUEL programme doesn't just directly impact those participants attending a camp, it also brings **wider positive outcomes** to the families and community.

This includes creating a platform for schools and other local services to connect, benefit local families and provide employment opportunities; **extending the social mobility** in targeted areas and **improving community cohesion**.

Services took on a joined up approach to ensure those young people who would benefit from the programme were given an opportunity to apply. During Easter registration **20 participants** were in **foster care**, **52 participants** were referred into the programme by **social services** and **21 participants** were **refugees**.

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Data collected from 133 families who completed the FUEL Easter feedback survey

80

Wiltshire residents had paid employment over Easter due to the FUEL programme



“

'I grew up attending school in Trowbridge, my mum was a single-parent and we qualified for free school meals.

The only vegetable I had at home was baked beans, pretty much, that's no reflection on my mum it's just that she hadn't been taught to cook. I started to get interested in food when I was 16, subsequently I trained at catering college. When I learnt to cook, I taught my mum to cook. She's pretty good now.

If I had been able to take part in a camp like this, my love of food would have been ignited so much earlier.

I can't tell you how much I get out of being involved with HAF. I genuinely feel privileged'

'What this project is does is nothing short of phenomenal. I've worked as a chef, professionally, for 15 years, and nothing has ever made me more proud than working on this project.

I am one of these kids. I would have absolutely loved it'

Feedback from local residents employed by commissioned food provider Occasional Kitchen



I first learnt about the FUEL programme when I signed up my son to attend the camp last Summer. He loved attending and was upset when it was time to go back to school at the end of the holidays because he was enjoying it so much, he was so excited to go back at Christmas.



I am a single parent and have been looking for a job since last July. I applied for a job to work on the Easter FUEL camps, the interview went really well and was excited to start. My son loved having his mum on camp and kept saying how lucky he was!

With the new skills and experience from working on the FUEL programme I since have updated my C.V and have been successful in getting a part time job as an SEN Youth Worker.

FUEL is a great programme and helps families who don't have extra money to take their children out over the holidays. The programme provides food, nutrition workshops with fresh vegetables and activities which all are new experiences for the children.

My son and I will be returning to attend and work on the FUEL programme this Summer!

Energy

Activity providers, Learn by Design, ensured participants attending the ten core FUEL camps were provided with a range of sport and enriching activities. This included 'high ticket sessions' such as laser tag, Olympic kit and an interactive digital quiz. The SEND provision included activities such as boccia, new age kurling and dance.

"There were many new activities for my son to try. Veg burger and marshmallow bunnies making, dance, playing instruments, coordination activities, sport games, informative quiz etc. The kids were kept busy and all the activities where positive experiences for them to talk about when they returned home!"

Easter FUEL feedback



65%

of participants did more physical activity as a result of attending Easter FUEL camps

Participant feedback showed that **88% of participants** that had attended FUEL camps in 2021 as well as the most recent Easter FUEL camps were **more confident** to try new activities in their day to day lives.

"Fuel made my child a lot more energetic too the point where she slept better at night"

Easter FUEL feedback

"The children were so excited every day going to the Fuel camp. It really helped them keep their minds flowing. All the different things they did. Would certainly send them again. It's a stop fun gap when not at school. Thankyou"

Easter FUEL feedback

78%

Stated they **really enjoyed** the overall experience of the FUEL camps



Enjoyed **taking part** in the activities on offer at the Easter FUEL camps

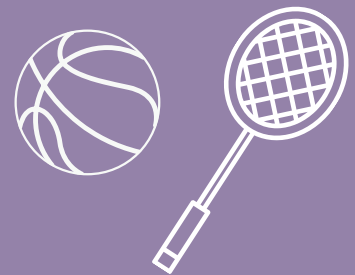


Liked the **range of activities** on offer at the Easter FUEL camps



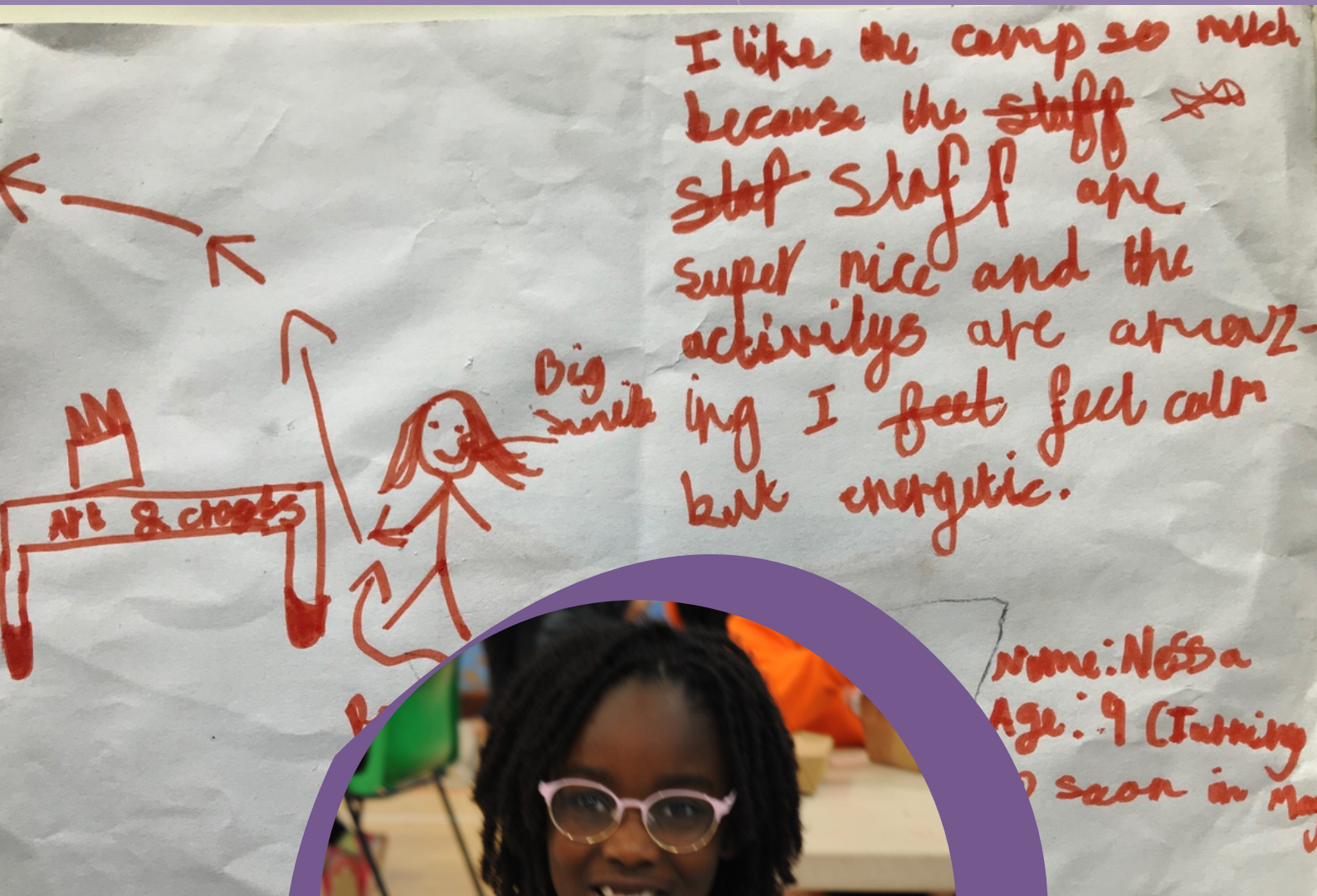
Tried a **new activity** as a result of attending Easter FUEL camps, including:

- Laser tag
- Rowing
- Badminton
- Badge making
- Drumming
- Basketball



1/2

Rated the activities on offer at Easter FUEL camps **10 out of 10**



“

I like the camp so much because the staff are super nice and the activities are amazing. I feel calm but energetic.

Nessa, Easter FUEL participant

Laughter

As well as providing structured activities and nutritional educational sessions, the Easter FUEL camps also provided the participants with an opportunity to **grow in confidence** and **develop social skills**.

"This programme has been amazing for my son! Everyone was helpful and so understanding about my son additional needs! He did amazing and loved everyday of it! I couldn't say thank you enough to FUEL for giving me son an amazing time and being able to make new friends! Thank you."

Easter FUEL feedback



63%

Found FUEL beneficial to their family over the Easter holidays

"Excellent service which helped us massively over Easter thank you"

Easter FUEL feedback

FUEL gives the participants an opportunity to **have fun** in a **safe and structured environment** without any financial cost to the families.

With providers ensuring all on the ground staff are **engaged, informative and enthusiastic** with the participants, this allows **friendships, enjoyment** and **laughter** to take place.

"This is definitely the best club my son has attended, the staff are lovely and helpful and I feel that my son will be looked after and safe."

Easter FUEL feedback

1/3

of participants became **more confident** and had **improved self-esteem** after attending Easter FUEL camps



Rated the **overall experience** of the Easter FUEL camp as **high**



Are interested in **attending future FUEL camps** in Summer 2022





This helped me as a single mother working over holidays so much knowing my child is having fun and making new friends when I'm at work, gave me a very good peace of mind so thank you so much for fantastic work

Parent, Easter FUEL feedback

FUEL summer camps 2022

Applications will open for participants to sign up for summer FUEL 2022 on the week commencing **20 June** and will be open until **15 July**. Delivery dates will take place Monday- Thursday, over the **4 weeks of August** (w/c 1 August- w/c 22 August)



FUEL summer camps will be made up of four components:

Core camps

The core offer will provide the delivery of ten activity camps, in priority areas of the county where there is the greatest number of children eligible for FSM. These camps will be delivered by three major commissioned suppliers, specialising in food, nutrition and activity provision

SEND specific camps

Additional FUEL camps for young people with special educational needs and/or a disability are will also be provided. These camps are delivered by Wiltshire Council staff and appointed coaches who have expertise in delivering and implementing successful provision.

Community grant funded camps

During the summer there is funding available to existing community organisations to develop additional HAF provision. This funding aims to extend the reach and capacity of the programme as a whole. Funded organisations also received nutritional training and resources to better enable them to deliver this aspect of the programme.

Pilot 'bolt on' adult activity

After consulting with parents at Easter, this summer we are piloting some adult sessions in two locations. These sessions will include working in partnership with services to provide physical activity and family learning opportunities.



Summer activities will look to include high value sessions such as:

- Climbing wall
- Circus skills
- Badge and magnet making
- Olympic kit
- Team building
- Nutritional workshops
- Invention workshops
- Football
- Basketball
- Badminton
- County wide art project



ALWAYS COOKING

SCHOOL FOOD. LIKE NO OTHER



LEARN
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Inspiring learners since 1995

We thank you for your continued support and efforts to contribute to Wiltshire HAF programme.



FUEL

The free holiday activity and food programme

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure/fuel-programme 

fuelprogramme@wiltshire.gov.uk 

Wiltshire Council 